BIL JO WHITE '74
BATMANIA
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BILJO WHITE--Editor Emeritus
RICH MORRISSEY--Editor
ARLEN SCHUMER--Art Director

BATMANIA

Our objective is to join together those who enjoy reading, collecting and watching the adventures of the Batman and Robin

The FANZINE for BATMAN FANS!

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OPERATION: REVIVAL

Can anybody come up with a better title for this introductory column? It won't be appropriate much longer, as this is the second issue of Batmania under my editorship.

First off, I'd like to apologize to those of you who have been waiting for weeks on end for my first issue, #18. All of the first run have been sold, and until Jim Balko (my only contact with access to a mimeograph machine) gets around to printing up more of some of the pages, I can't send out any more. But there will be enough for everyone who's ordered it so far -with luck, I should be able to send it out along with this issue.

Happily, there won't be any more problems of this sort at least. I've found a less expensive printer, thanks to Mike Pasman--it was responsible for his ad in #18. Which, by the way, has not drawn any response so far--so, after what he's done for me, I'll remind you that he's interested in all comics, posters, or anything else containing Neal Adams art. So if you have any you want to sell, write him at 69 Kingswood Rd., Auburndale, Massachusetts 02166.

At any rate, Batmania is now entirely offset--but without raising the price one bit! What's more, the page count has now gone up to 30, including the 1974 Batmania Ballot. (Because of the delay in sending out #18, I'm saving the results of that issues's 1973 Ballot for next issue. Some of the categories, like "Best Batman Teamup," have a very evident leader right now, but others, such as "Favorite Editor," are extremely close.)

Because of all the material that almost had to go in, Update got squeezed out this time around--but you Zilber fans need not worry; it'll be back next issue. Also coming up is a new article by Mike Friedrich. (His piece in this issue was written and submitted to Tiljo White in July, 1967, but never published until now.)

I've also heard from Tom Fagan, whose annual parade of comic book characters every Hallowe'en has gained more publicity for Rutland, Vermont than Pearl Buck ever did! A famed fan writer and Batmanian from way back, he will soon be writing for Batmania -but right now, he's come up with some excellent suggestions for the revival of the legendary Batmanians.

Each state is now designated as a "Cavern," and is headed by a "Night Creature." If you'd like to run for Night Creature of your state, be sure to let me know -in some Caverns there won't be much competition, but in others there appears to be a rousing contest in store! Or if you'd prefer to run for Chieftain of all the Batmanians, by all means do so. (Tom still claims this office at present, to which he was elected many years ago--but he doesn't want to be unchallenged!)

But be sure to let me know by November 1st, which is my deadline for Batmania #20. (In other words, quite appropriately, I must have all names in on or before next Hallowe'en!)

It's September 1st as I type this, the last page of the zine to be prepared. Tomorrow I'll take it down to the printer (a very obliging one, to be open on Labor Day!) and it should be ready, as should more copies of #18, by the end of the week. It'll then be ready to go out--and I hope you'll find it worth the wait.

--Rich Morrissey

Blood, Sweat, and Tears ...and Then Some

or

How to Sell a BATMAN Story in 12 Easy (?) Lessons

by "Castro" Mike Friedrich

•LOGOS & ILLUSTRATION BY ARLEN SCHUMER•

Background: In the spring of 1966, NPP issued a statement at the end of most of their lettercols to the effect that "letters will not be answered unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope." Now to any normal-thinking person (like myself, natch), this meant "letters will be answered when accompanied by an SASE." So I made a practice of writing a LOC to every Julius Schwartz mag that came out, enclosing an envelope for a reply. A regular correspondence was set up this way (though I had to wait days and weeks for replies because thousands of other fans had the same idea I had). In early June I asked a post-scriptual question to the effect "Do you take seriously reader contributions?," adding that I had an idea for a story that I would like to submit. The reply was...(dated June 16, 1966)

> "Finally, do I 'take seriously reader contributions'? Yes and no--depends on the contributor. In your case, you get the red carpet treatment. As a matter of fact, I definitely do encourage you to take a crack at writing for me. I'm open for EVERYTHING!
>
> "However, I recommend that you send me a plot first--no point in doing a whole script based on an idea or development I don't like--or on something similar I may have coming up.
>
> "Believe me, I'm not putting you 'on' with writing for me. I'm hopeful you can come up with some fresh ideas. I'm confident that you have the literary ability to make a go of it--if not right off, then in due time, if you're willing to stick to it and learn the business..."

Naturally, I went out of my skull--Julie Schwartz asking ME to write for HIM! Me, who had never done anything in the line

of straight fiction more than a short story for an English class the year before! I quickly dashed up a Batman story featuring the return of the old villain TWO-FACE and sent it in...

> "(June 27, 1966) When I invited you to take a crack at writing for one of my magazines, I didn't anticipate you'd start off with a BATMAN! Surely this is one of the toughest for a beginner to handle--and while I can appreciate your trying to achieve the heights right off, I prefer you 'break in' with a shorter type of feature or story, perhaps an ELONGATED MAN, ATOM, etc. In addition, of all the Batman villains to choose from, you hit upon TWO-FACE--a character so repugnant that the TV bigwigs turned it down! I have no desire to inflict this villain upon my **readers** (a feeling that's subject to change). Your plot is Bill Fingerish, which while it isn't so bad, it isn't so hot either. The two-based crimes are in the standard old Batman tradition--but I'd just as soon get away from the theme where villain leaves cryptic clues with B&R tracking them down to the inevitable conclusion [EAT YOUR WORDS, JULIE!!!]..."

But what's what the TV people think got to do with what <u>you</u> do? And Bill Finger was the man behind the classic stories in the early forties. What's wrong with that? Oh well, then JS made his famous trip to California for a vacation. Here is where the blood part comes in--and I get sick thinking about it still. Suffice to say, I wrote up a "suprise" EM story to spring on him when I was scheduled to meet him when he got to my area. Due to automotive circumstances beyond my control (ask Guy H. Lillian III for details), I was unable to meet him and so I mailed the script in. The reply upon his return...

> "(August 19, 1966) Let me start right off that it was a blow to me to read your script. Here's a correspondant--and darn good critic--who writes well-conceived letters in a breezy, almost flip style (among other things) and then comes up with such a flat, dull, uninspired, unconvincing script! To pick out its faults, I'd need a derrick, so all I could do is hint at them in the script itself. [And he had gone in great detail in pointing out the mistakes in the script]. I had hoped--even expected--some real good, colorful dialogue--snappy captions--original gags. I got back nothing!
>
> "If all this disheartens you, don't let it get you down. Experience is still the best teacher. The best science-fiction writer in the business wrote dozens and dozens of stories before he made his (okay--it's Ray Bradbury) first sale (through me, incidentally, as his agent). If I knew the plot beforehand (as I asked), I would have rejected it then and there. I'm sure you can do better; I know you will eventually. You had to learn to crawl before you could walk..."

Okay, so I tried again. The then-current BATMAN featured a story with The Joker. I got the idea for a ROBIN solo story

with that villain and sent in a plot along with my usual critique on the issue. His reply...

"(August 31, 1966) In your attemt to evaluate '"The Joker's Original Robberies"' you came up with the word 'professional' (you muffed the authorship--it was John Broome)--wish that your Joker plot could be tagged with the same word! I searched your outline over and over and was hard-pressed to find anything to excite me... [then followed 15 lines of criticism and comments, ending with]...To do a story in which it's nero versus villain only--and without some sub-plot and dramatic characterization--is hardly enough to grip the reader. Cry a bit--then try again...

"Stop pressing me on the subject of whether Bob Kane does his own work. It's not my business to tell--not yours to know. Besides, the only one who really knows is Bob Kane himself." [I threw that in to show what answer I got when I asked the perennial question!]

Well, I'm a persistant person sometimes, so I came up with answers to his objections and re-submitted the plot again...

"(September 7, 1966) If you were here in person we could argue effectively over the objections I raised in the Robin-Joker plot, but since you're stuck way out there, all I can do is answer your counter-objections with [a list of further criticism]...I think you're wasting time on this solo R plot as it's shaping up--but if you insist on another time at bat, go ahead--but if it isn't a strike-out, I'll be suprised (and delighted)."

I went over the plot and changed the villain to the Riddler, since one of his main objections was having the Joker act like the Riddler. The inevitable answer came...

"(Sept. 27, 1966) I was taken aback by your switching Joker to Riddler. I happen to have a Riddler story scheduled for the April DETECTIVE--and that's enough for next year...[then some more criticism]...Finally, I can't believe this will ever make a good story, so I say--junk it!

"All of which leaves you nowhere--again. Try again (cry again?)--maybe you'll hit it next time. How about an ATOM or HAWKMAN?"

I bugged him one more time with more "answers" and he wearily consented to let me write up a script...

"(November 2, 1966) At last--here's your script back--red-pencilled where you've fallen short. Another try-out that failed (I wasn't enthusiastic about it from the start, remember)--but at least it's another script out of your system--and an advance over your prior one--if you can use some encouragement."

I sure could. Just then I had finished reading Issac Asimov's two Robot anthologies and was very up on the Three Laws of Robotics. I came up with the idea of having Green Lantern visit a world of robots and encounter the Three Laws in practice...

> "(November 22, 1966) On the GL plot. Frankly, it was confusing to follow--but perhaps you can make it clear enough in the actual writing--which I'm allowing you to do on the chance you can make something out of it--simplifying as much as possible, especially the Three Laws of Robotics (which I'm sure the majority of readers are unfamiliar with).
>
> "A few points on the plot itself: [20 lines of suggestions and criticisms]...If you can take care of my objections, give the story a try. Come up with dramatic captions, swinging dialogue, good scene transition and action that hasn't been done over and over. Please don't excuse yourself by saying that I (or Fox and Broome) do it. Perhaps so--but you should beat out original paths of your own."

So I wrote it up and turned it in. But all of a sudden I didn't get any answer from him in months. I got a little desperate. I sent notes and letters and carrier pigeons to 575 Lexington and all I got back was a note saying he'd write soon. Finally...

> "(March 21, 1967) Still haven't been able to dissect your GL story--but obviously it's not an acceptance; just about a reject. It looks like it'll be better to talk this out when you get to NYC--although the date might run into my vacation time. Perhaps you can switch your trip to late August, thereby being around to take in the science-fiction convention here over Labor Day.
>
> "If you're looking for further encouragement from me, work up a Batman plot dealing with--CATWOMAN. Neither Broome nor Fox is familiar with her (and that goes for me, too), but maybe your knowledge of her will be helpful."

I had just about given up on the GL thing anyway, and to finally be asked to try a BM plot was good, after trying to be nudged into an Elongated Man, Atom, or such plot. But Catwoman??? Just a few weeks before I had a letter printed saying that I was glad CW would stay in mothballs, and if a femme villainess was needed, Poison Ivy would be much better. So I laughed my head off and came up with a half-hearted CW story that incorporated the character of the original CW, which wasn't what Julie wanted, since he obviously was trying to please the requests for the television villainess. During the letter-freeze period, though, I had come up with an idea for a Robin story, having the Teen Titan face a group of Hell's Angels types. (Tom Fagan get up and take a bow for the germ of this idea with your telephone call mentioning you were interested in the group). So I turned

them both in. The answer:

"(March 31, 1967) As for the Catwoman story-plot--alas, you disappointed me. There doesn't seem to be anything much new, original, or clever in the story. Even the dramatic human interest is cliche...[another long series of comments and suggestions and objections to my idea]...It's always good to have a human interest subplot in a yarn, but I don't think the love interest bit is it. Can you conjure up something else of interest? Whip up another plot if you can.

"Report on Robin story: [he started right off with a full page of suggestions and questions, ending with an okay to write a script]...I see this as a nine-pager. It would be very helpful if you could round up some swipes (pictures of type uniforms gang wears, bikes, etc.) for artist. Dialogue should swing--be modern (although not mod)--colorful captions--and good transitions from one panel to another. I prefer no more than six panels a page--plus 4 or 5-panel pages where colorful action is going on, with interesting backgrounds."

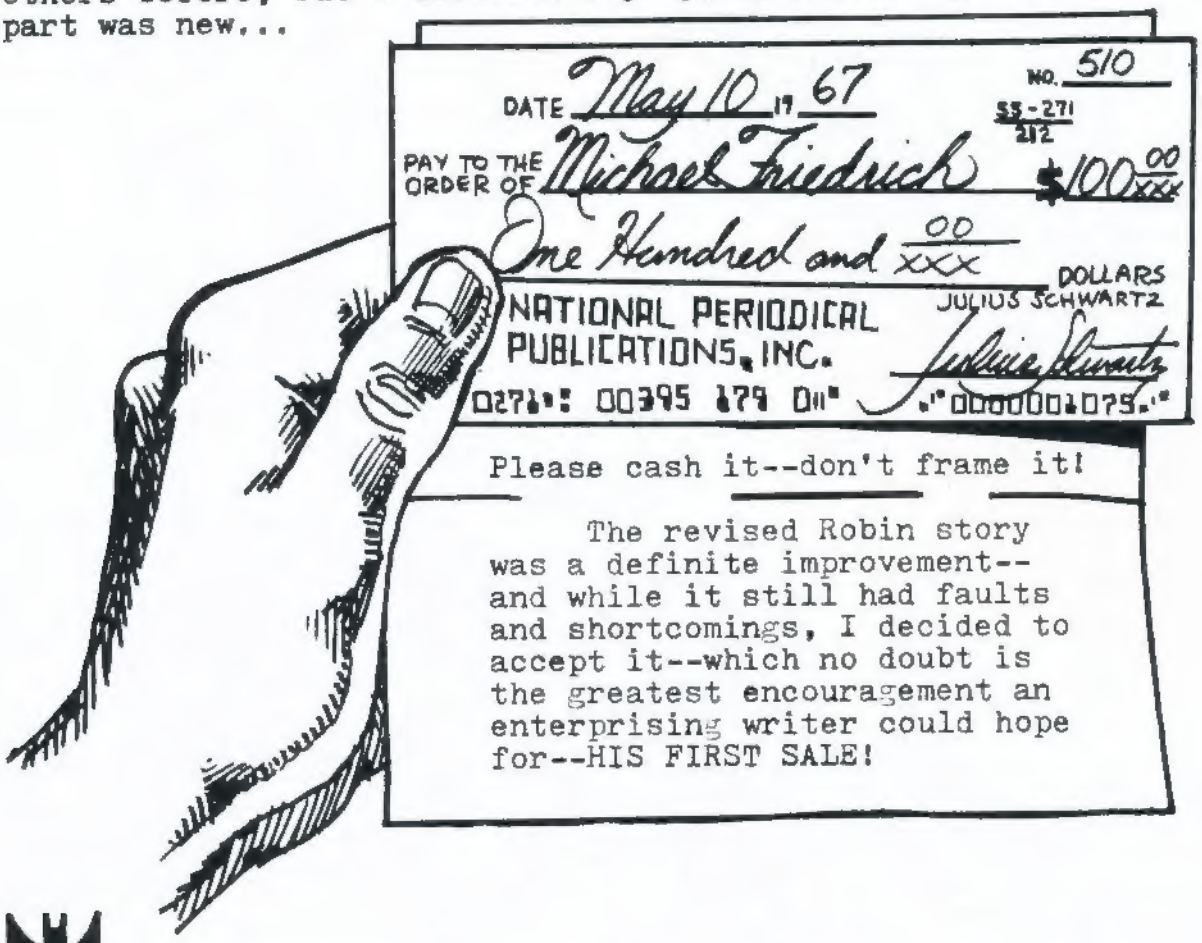
This was by far the best encouragement I'd been given so far. So I kissed Catwoman good-bye (it turned out he did a story with her anyway) and went to work on the Robin story. I took a lot of time on it and tried to make it as realistic as possible. The last half of the story showed Robin invading the motorcyclists' gang hideout. In this scene I had the gang doing what I felt they normally would be doing--smoking grass. I had checked the Comics Code and there was nothing specific against it, so I used it. I turned it in, ignoring that little"catch-all" clause that the Code has, and which is being used in this case regarding drugs...

"(April 19, 1967) Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine you'd incorporate a dope-drug angle into your story! That's taboo--and OUT! But let's start at the beginning...[again, he went into detail on the story's faults]...Page 5: from here on your story falls apart--with its references to marijuana, booze, etc. All taboo subjects. You'll just have to "dope" out another angle [HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA]. Story could use more action at end--even if you have to make this a 10-pager to do so.

"It'll take time, but it might be advisable to re-plot this before re-writing it--unless you want to take the gamble."

Needless to say, I was extremely depressed at this particular rejection. I had made the villains as real as life (I felt) and it turned out that was illegal. I fired off a bitter letter to this effect, making some extreme satirical statements about my editor's policy, since I considered it to be his own censorship and not the Code's. I said to hell with re-plotting and turned in a new script. In it I cleaned up the bad guys, and after my bitterness had subsided, I was proud of my work. I

threw in an overly dramatic scene at the end and had some good, real modern slang that Fox/Broome were usually devoid of. So I turned it in the first week of May. An air mail-special delivery envelope came back three days later. It was as thick as all the others before, but I trembled anyway, since the special delivery part was new...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$100 00/xxx
One Hundred and 00/xxx DOLLARS
NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.
JULIUS SCHWARTZ
Please cash it--don't frame it!
The revised Robin story was a definite improvement--and while it still had faults and shortcomings, I decided to accept it--which no doubt is the greatest encouragement an enterprising writer could hope for--HIS FIRST SALE!

You can fill in the rest of my day--I can truthfully say that it was the most joyful day in my life, and total happiness is something NOBODY can put in words. Forgotten was the first rejection...forgotten was the fact that he edited the heck out of the script (he sent me a zerox copy of it, which was why the envelope was so thick) and had to improve some poor spots...forgotten was the tragic night of July 4th...forgotten were the 11 months of blood, sweat, and tears... I HAD MADE IT!

UPDATE ON THE AUTHOR

Mike's aforementioned story was finally published in BATMAN #203, June, 1968 (entitled "Menace of the Motorcycle Marauders"). His brief BATMAN-writing stint, in 1970, produced three mini-classics: "The Silent Night of The Batman" (Feb., #219), "Hot Time in Gotham Town Tonight" (May, #221), and "Shutdown on York Street" (Sept., #225).

He then took over the authorship of the JLA with issue #86 (Dec. '70). After writing 13 issues, he left after issue #99 and began writing for Marvel.

Presently, he has formed his own underground comics company, STAR*REACH PRODUCTIONS, and is editor of his critically acclaimed magazine, STAR*REACH.

Detective COMICS INDEX

by Raymond L. Miller

•UPDATED & ILLUSTRATED BY ARLEN SCHUMER•

ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN THE *ROCKET'S BLAST- COMICOLLECTOR #76-77*

DETECTIVE COMICS was one of the first comic magazines published containing all-new material devoted to a single theme, that of detective and crime-solving cases. Little would readers of its first issue in 1937 know that two years later, the May, 1939 issue would showcase a brand-new character whose enigma and exploits would soon make him "The World's Greatest Detective"...

5/39	#27	"The Case of the Chemical Syndicate" NOTE: The Batman was cover-featured alternately from issue #27-35. From issue #35 and on, he has been on every DETECTIVE COMICS cover.	6 pages
	#28	No title; The Batman cleans up a jewel robbery	10
	#29	"The Batman Meets Dr. Death" His first "name" villain	10
	#30	No title; Dr. Death's brought to justice	10
	#31	No title; The Batman meets The Monk The Baterang and Batgyro are introduced	10
	#32	No title; BM defeats The Monk in Hungaria	10
	#33	"The Dirigible of Doom" and The Batman's origin	12
	#34	"The Man With No Face"	"
1/40	#35	"Sin Fang and Kila, God of Destruction"	"
	#36	"Professor Hugo Strange"	"
	#37	No title; The Batman's last solo appearance	"
	#38	"Robin, the Boy Wonder" and his origin	"
	#39	"The Horde of the Green Dragon"	"
	#40	No title; The Batman putties around with Clayface	"
	#41	No title; almost a Robin solo story	"
	#42	"The Case of the Prophetic Pictures"	13
	#43	"The Case of the City of Terror"	13
	#44	"The Land Behind the Light" Dick Grayson dreams this story	13

	#45	"The Case of the Laughing Death"	13
	#46	"The Return of Professor Hugo Strange"	13
1/41	#47	No title	13
	#48	"The Secret Cavern"	13
	#49	"Clayface Walks Again"	13
	#50	"The Case of the Three Devils"	12
	#51	"The Case of the Mystery Carnival"	13
	#52	"The Secret of the Jade Box"	"
	#53	"The Batman vs. Toothy"	"
	#54	"Hook Morgan and His Harbor Pirates"	"
	#55	"The Brain Burglar"	"
	#56	"The Stone Idol"	"
	#57	"Twenty-four Hours to Live"	"
	#58	"The Batman vs. The Penguin"; first Penguin tale	"
1/42	#59	"The King of the Jungle"; The Penguin again	"
	#60	"Case of the Costume-clad Killers"; The Joker	"
	#61	"The Three Racketeers"	"
	#62	"Laugh, Town, Laugh"; The Joker	"
	#63	"A Gentleman in Gotham"	"
	#64	"The Joker Walks the Last Mile"	"
	#65	"The Cop Who Hated The Batman"	"
	#66	"The Crimes of Two-face"; first Two face	"
	#67	"Crime's Early Bird"; The Penguin	"
	#68	"The Man Who Led a Double Life"; Two'face	"
	#69	"The Harlequin Hoax"; with The Joker	"
	#70	"The Man Who Could Read Minds"	"
1/43	#71	"A Crime a Day"; The Joker	"
	#72	"License for Larceny"	"
	#73	"The Scarecrow Returns"	"
	#74	"Tweedledum and Tweedledee"	"
	#75	"The Robber Baron"	12
	#76	"Slay'em With Flowers"; The Joker	"
	#77	"The Crime Clinic"; with the Crime Doctor	"
	#78	"The Bond Wagon"	"
	#79	"Destiny's Auction"	"
	#80	"The End of Two'face"	"
	#81	"The Cavalier of Crime"; with The Cavalier	"
	#82	"Quarterback of Crime"	"
1/44	#83	"Accidentally on Purpose"	"
		Alfred loses all that weight	
	#84	"Artists in Villainy"	13
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	#86	"Danger Strikes Three"	"
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	#88	"The Merchants of Misery"	"
	#89	"Laboratory Loot"; The Cavalier	12
	#90	"Crime Between the Acts"	13
	#91	"The Case of the Practical Joker"; The Joker	"
	#92	"Crime's Manhunt"	"
	#93	"One Night of Crime"	"
	#94	"No One Must Know"	"
1/45	#95	"The Batman vs. The Blaze"	"
	#96	"Alfred, Private Detective"	12
	#97	"The Secret of the Switch"	"
	#98	"The King of the Hoboes"	"
	#99	"The Temporary Murders"; The Penguin	"

	#100	"The Crow's Nest Mystery"	12
	#101	"The Tyrannical Twins"	"
	#102	"The House That Was Held for Ransom"; The Joker	"
	#103	"Trouble, Incorporated"	"
	#104	"The Battle of the Billboards"	"
	#105	"The Batman Goes Broke"	"
	#106	"The Phantom of the Library"	11
1/46	#107	"The Mountain of the Moon"	12
	#108	"The Goat of Gotham City"; first Jet Batplane	"
	#109	"The House That Joker Built"	"
	#110	"Batman and Robin in Scotland Yard"	"
	#111	"Coaltown, U.S.A."	"
	#112	"The Case Without a Crime"	"
	#113	"Crime on the Half-shell"	11
	#114	"Acrostic of Crime"; with The Joker	12
	#115	"The Man Who Lived in a Glass House"	"
	#116	"The Rescue of Robin Hood"; time trip	"
	#117	"Steeplejack's Showdown"	"
	#118	"The Royal Flush Crimes"; The Joker	"
1/47	#119	"The Case of the Famous Foes"	"
	#120	"Fowl Play"; The Penguin	"
	#121	"Commisioner Gorden Walks a Beat"	"
	#122	"The Black Cat Crimes"; The Catwoman returns	13
	#123	"The Dawn Patrol"	12
	#124	"The Crime Parade"; The Joker	12
	#125	"The Citadel of Crime"	13
	#126	"The Case of the Silent Songbirds"; The Penguin	12
	#127	"Pygmies in Giantland"	"
	#128	"Crime in Reverse"; The Joker	"
	#129	"The Isle of Yesterday"	"
	#130	"The Box"	13
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	#132	"The Human Ray"	"
	#133	"The Man Who Could See the Future"	"
	#134	"The Umbrellas of Crime"; The Penguin	"
	#135	"The True Story of Frankenstein"; time trip	"
	#136	"The Dead Man's Chest"; time trip	"
	#137	"The Rebus Crimes"; The Joker	"
	#138	"The Invisible Crimes"; The Joker again	"
	#139	"The Crimes of Jade"	"
	#140	"The Batman vs. The Riddler"; first Riddler	10
	#141	"The Gallery of Public Heroes"	10
	#142	"Crime's Puzzle Contest"; with The Riddler	12
1/49	#143	"The Pied Piper of Peril"	"
	#144	"Kay Kyser's Mystery Broadcast"	"
		Radio Star Kay Kyser guest-stars	
	#145	"Robin, the Boy Failure"	"
	#146	"Three's a Crime"	"
	#147	"Tiger Shark"	"
	#148	"The Experiment of Professor Zero"	"
	#149	"The Sound Effects Crimes"; The Joker	"
	#150	"The Ghost of Gotham City"	"
	#151	"I.O.U. My Life"	"
	#152	"The Goblin of Gotham City"	"
	#153	"The Flying Batman"	"
	#154	"Underground Railroad of Crime"	"

1/50	#155	"Bruce Wayne, Private Detective"	12
	#156	"The Batmobile of 1950"; new Batmobile	"
	#157	"The Race of the Century"	"
	#158	"The Thousand and One Trophies of The Batman"	"
	#159	"Bruce Wayne--You Are Batman"	"
	#160	"Globetrotter of Crime"	"
	#161	"The Men Who Died on Time"	"
	#162	"The Law of the Iron Road"	"
	#163	"The Man Who Feared Metal"	"
	#164	"Untold Tales of the Bat-signal"	"
	#165	"The Strange Costumes of Batman"	"
	#166	"The Man With a Million Faces"	"
1/51	#167	"Bodyguards of Cleopatra"; time trip	"
	#168	"The Man Behind the Red Hood"; origin of The Joker	13
	#169	"Batman--Boss of the Big House"	12
	#170	"The Flying Dutchman II"	"
	#171	"The Menace of the Giant Birds"; The Penguin	"
	#172	"The Outlaw Who Had Nine Lives"	"
	#173	"Batman's Double"; with Killer Moth	"
	#174	"The Park Avenue Kid"	"
	#175	"The Underworld Bank"	"
	#176	"The Underworld Crime Committee"	"
	#177	"The Robberies in the Bat-cave"	"
	#178	"The Defeat of Batman"	10
1/52	#179	"Mayor Bruce Wayne"	12
	#180	"The Joker's Millions"	"
	#181	"The Crimes of the Human Magnet"	"
	#182	"The Human Puppets"	"
	#183	"Famous Name Crimes"	"
	#184	"The Human Firefly"	"
	#185	"The Secrets of Batman's Utility Belt"	"
	#186	"The Flying Bat-cave"	"
	#187	"The Double Crimes of Two-face"	"
	#188	"The Doom in the Bat-cave"	"
	#189	"The Underseas Hideout"	"
	#190	"How to be The Batman"	"
1/53	#191	"The Man With a License to Kill"	"
	#192	"The Phantom Eye of Gotham City"	"
	#193	"The Joker's Journal"	"
	#194	"The Stolen Bank"	"
	#195	"The Original Batman"	"
	#196	"City Without Guns"	"
	#197	"The League Against Batman"; with The Wrecker	"
	#198	"The Lord of Batmanor"	"
	#199	"The Invisible Batman"	"
	#200	"Radio Station C.R.I.M.E."	"
	#201	"Human Target"	"
	#202	"Millionaire Island"	"
1/54	#203	"The Crimes of The Catwoman"	"
	#204	"The Man Who Could Live Forever"	"
	#205	"The Origin of the Bat-cave"; time trip	"
	#206	"The Trapper of Gotham City"	"
	#207	"Batman the Magician"	"
	#208	"The Nine Worlds of Batman"	"
	#209	"The Man Who Shadowed Batman"	"
	#210	"The Brain That Ruled Gotham City"	"

	#211	"The Jungle Cat-queen"; with Catwoman	12
	#212	"The Puppet Master"	"
	#213	"The Mysterious Mirror-man"; with Mirror-man	"
	#214	"The Batman Encyclopedia"	"
1/55	#215	"The Batman of All Nations"	10
	#216	"The Batman of Tomorrow"	12
	#217	"The Mental Giant of Gotham City"	10
	#218	"Batman Junior and Robin Senior"	12
	#219	"Gotham City's Strangest Race"	"
	#220	"The Second Batman and Robin Team"	"
	#221	"The Thousand-and-one Escapes of Batman and Robin"	"
	#222	"The Great Batman Swindle"	"
	#223	"The Batman Dime Museum"	"
	#224	"The Batman Machine"	"
	#225	"If I Were Batman"	"
	#226	"When Batman Was Robin"	"
1/56	#227	"The 50 Faces of Batman"	"
	#228	"The Outlaw Batman"	"
	#229	"The 10,000 Secrets of Batman"	"
	#230	"The Mad Hatter of Gotham City"; with Mad Hatter	"
	#231	"Batman, Junior"	"
	#232	"The Outlaw Who Played Batman"	"
	#233	"The Batwoman"; and her origin	"
	#234	"Batman and Robin's Greatest Mystery"	"
	#235	"The First Batman"	10
	#236	"The New-model Batman"	10
	#237	"Search for a New Robin"	10
	#238	"The Doors That Hid Disaster"	12
1/57	#239	"Batman's Robot Twin"	"
	#240	"The Outlaw Batman"	"
	#241	"The Rainbow Batman"	"
	#242	"The Underworld Bat-cave"	"
	#243	"Batman, the Giant"	"
	#244	"The 100 Batarangs of Batman"	"
	#245	"The Dynamic Trio"	"
	#246	"Murder at Mystery Castle"	"
	#247	"The Man Who Ended Batman's Career"	"
	#248	"Around the World in 8 Days"	"
	#249	"The Crime of Bruce Wayne"	"
	#250	"Batman's Super Enemy"	"
1/58	#251	"The Alien Batman"	"
	#252	"The Creature From the Green Lagoon"	"
	#253	"The Fox, The Shark, and The Vulture"	"
	#254	"One Ounce of Doom"	"
	#255	"Death in Dinosaur Hall"	"
	#256	"The Captive Planet"	"
	#257	"Batman's Invincible Foe"	"
	#258	"Prisoners of the Giant Robots"	"
	#259	"The Challenge of Calendar Man"	"
	#260	"The Mystery of the Space Olympus"	"
	#261	"The Amazing Dr. Double X"	"
	#262	"The Jackal of the Underworld"	"

Next issue concludes this index, with the years 1959 to the present covered. Schiff's last years as editor leads the way for Schwartz' "New Look," which bridges into the "camp" era, and finally into The Batman's present "Big Change." Don't miss it!

THE BATMAN OF OLD AND NEW

By Robert Mallory

Anyone who has picked up a recent issue of Batman for the first time since 1968 might well have trouble believing that this is the same comic book hero that that campy TV show of a few years back professed to portray. More likely than not that particular issue would feature Batman and Robin in solo stories. Okay, the reader may think, I've seen a couple of issues before with the Dynamic Duo not being teamed up. But what's with the way they're drawing Batman now? His ears are so long and his cape is more like a cloak now. His chest emblem somehow looks more stylish than it used to. Gee, he almost looks scary now! And what's this, Batman doesn't live in Wayne Manor anymore? Hudson University? You mean they finally sent Robin to college? Unbelievable. So they call him The Batman now, eh? Say, I think I remember reading somewhere that he used to be called that back in the comics of the forties. Of course! Now that the camp craze is over, nostalgia is the big thing. Hmmmm... art by Neal Adams. I remember him, he used to draw Deadman and The Spectre, the real spooky guys...yeah. This looks pretty interesting, I guess I'll buy it. I wonder who this Ras al Ghul guy is...

For yet another time in his career the "Dark Knight" has undergone a "new look," although this time the change could be termed "the old look." In many ways The Batman now more closely resembles the character of the 1939-1943 era than he does that of the 1964-1968 period. Of course there are major differences in the ways The Batman of the early days and The Batman of the seventies are handled. For example, The Batman of old was not as much of a detective as he is currently being portrayed. More than anything else, the early Batman was an all-around adventurer.

The first few Batman stories were pretty much detective stories, but even before the introduction of Robin, The Batman had been in tales that could better be described as a series of battles of wits between himself and the likes of Dr. Death and Hugo Strange. Of course these can be argued as being legitimate detective stories, as both Dick Tracy and Kerry Drake have had cases involving bizarre villains, but in The Batman's case many of the stories were not mystery fiction at all. I don't think many will disagree with me in the statement that the two-part vampire story in Detective Comics #31-32 was not a detection-oriented adventure. It was after Robin's entrance, however, that adventures of all types became a frequent occurrence.

For the most part, Detective featured detective and villain stories as befitted its title; Batman's own book was quite a different matter. The first thirteen issues of Batman included fourteen mysteries, nine "human interest" stories, one spy tale, two science-fiction adventures, two supernatural takes, a phony prehistoric land plot, a courtroom drama, a pirate story, a gang war conflict, a take-off on Moby Dick, the reprinted origin of The Batman, a penitentiary takeover drama, a seeming breakup between the Dynamic Duo, a story reminiscing about past adventures, a tale about a typical day for The Batman, fourteen villain stories and one Western! From this it can be seen that The Batman was far from a strict detective.

By 1943 Alfred became part of a growing cast of characters, originally appearing as a rather fat butler whofancied himself a detective. Shortly after he slimmed down and grew a mustache, just in time for the first syndicated Batman newspaper strip. The daily strip would be detective stories for the most part with only two villain stories, while the Sunday featured a few more villain tales as well as adventures of many other varieties. The Batman even starred in his own movie serial that same year.

After the newspaper strip ended in 1946, the classic image of The Batman began to decline. Still, the middle-to-late forties would hold a lot in store for the feature. From 1944 to 1946 Alfred had his own feature in Batman that proved to be more popular than the Lois Lane feature in the Superman comic of the same time.

A much bigger year for Batman was 1947. The February issue of Star-Spangled Comics introduced the Robin solo feature that ran until the July issue, #130, in 1952! The biggest criticism concerning this series is that Robin often shared the story with Batman, defeating the whole purpose for which the feature had been created. Sadly, for the most part Batman did not solo in his own magazines. Another thing that marred the Robin strip was its lack of great villains. The only ones worth remembering were Crazy Quilt (originally a foe of the Boy Commandos), Dante Leonardo, and Robin's own arch-foe, The Clock.

Other important events during 1947 were Batman's acquisition of the famous giant penny trophy and his appearance with the Justice Society of America in the 36th issue of All-Star Comics--this being the

only time Batman actually participated in an adventure of that legendary group.

The only other major event in the late forties took place in the 47th issue of Batman, in which Batman caught up to the man who murdered his parents. Later, in 1956, a sequel would appear in which Batman encountered the man who had hired Joey Chill.

The early fifties would introduce a new Batmobile and Batplane, and though Batman was more clearly defined as a detective, an element of "gimmickiness" was now incorporated into the stories. The origin of The Batwoman and The Joker were at last told, and The Catwoman would actually reform and become a sometime partner of Batman and Robin. In the early sixties she would be replaced by The Catman, till in one of his better moves Julius Schwartz had her revived. How was it that the villains retained their definite articles long after Batman dropped his. One reason, perhaps, was that by the mid-fifties Batman's equipment (utility belt, etc.) was more emphasized than was the hero himself. Many stories revolved around the Batmobile, the batarangs, the Batcave and the utility belt.

In 1953 a 3-D edition of Batman and one of Superman appeared. In the Batman 3-D a Penguin story from the late forties was reprinted, with the panel of the '40's Batmobile altered to that of the '50's. This is but one example of the unfortunate orwellian rewriting of history so prevalent in the comics.

Besides this, throughout the years science fiction played an increasing part in the feature. Far too large a part. As the late 1950's rolled along, a reader would have had trouble finding an issue of Batman without some strange new invention used by criminals or some alien from space. During this period, Batman came off best in World's Finest where he was teamed up with Superman, where the science-fiction format was less jarring because of Superman's adventures through the years.

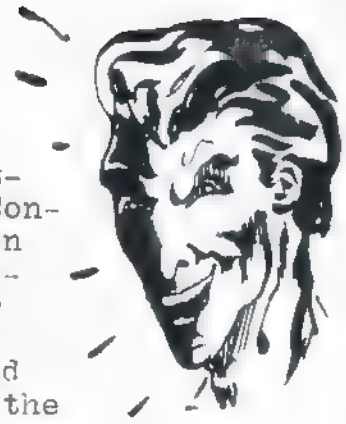
It was in 1959 that the final, most symbolic blow was struck. Though Batman had been burdened by a Batwoman, he still stood out as the definite nocturnal creature in comparison. As far back as the first Robin story and perhaps even before, Batman had been in the habit of sending a live bat to criminals as a warning. Finally one crook did the logical thing--he put a tracing device on the bat so it would lead him right to the Batcave. After that, Batman never again sent a bat to anyone. It was the end of an era.

Qualitywise, the early sixties were a bad time for Batman. He hardly stood out amongst Batwoman, Batgirl, the Bathound and worst of all, Batmite. Suddenly it was fighting monsters, aliens and super-machines and robots that had become his specialty, rather than actual detection.

Of all the science-fiction stories of turning into a monster or invisible, only the time-travel stories seemed to click. Perhaps this was because time travel had been an established storyline for the feature since the mid-forties.

Hey!
D'ya think the original Batgirl is still romping about in Earth 2 and has aged along with the Many Wonder - Robin - and Bats? This drawing is based on that
mercy

Still, even among the Batman's worst years there were bright moments to be had. The Joker, Catwoman and Penguin stories would have some of the older feature's punch. And even though he was a science-fiction type, the new Clayface's stories somehow worked. Occasionally a good full-length tale like "Robin Dies at Dawn!" would appear.



Also, the editor made some trouble for himself by putting out a soon-to-be-semi-annual "Giant Batman Annual." Considering that DC would then reprint stories no earlier than the fifties, the tales that Mr. Schiff selected for the Giants were, for the most part, excellent choices. The older stories were noticeably superior to the current fare. Fans started to demand the better stories that they now realized were possible with Batman. Quality shone out after all in the end. Maybe this was one of the reasons that the big changes were made in 1964.

The "new look" Batman was a godsend to a previously-mediocre comic. Though the character didn't seem much different in his Justice League appearances, in Detective, his own mag, or soon in World's Finest, he was a changed man. Bad supporting characters like Batwoman were dropped from the series. A bad move had been the killing off of Alfred, but thanks to one of television's more important demands, he was brought back to life. A Fantastic Four the Batman comic wasn't, but the stories and the artwork, now divided between Bob Kane and Carmine Infantino, were better than Batman had seen in years. Things hadn't looked so good for Batman in a long time. Then, on January 12, 1966, came the twice-weekly TV show.

The show was designed to be a spoof of the Dynamic Duo more than anything else. 1966 was a big year for the infamous "Camp" craze that had swept the country. The TV show's main writer, Lorenzo Semple, Jr., deliberately wrote the most moronic dialogue anyone had yet heard on TV. It was in fact he who created the stereotype "Holy" syndrome for Robin, ignoring the fact that he was instead known for his infamous punning. Perhaps that would have required too much thought for the writers.

Still, the television show immediately hit the top of the Nielsen ratings. Why would an idiot's version of Batman prove so successful? Part of the credit must be given to the incredible advertising announcing the show. Instead of seeing Batman, the viewers were spoken to by Commissioner Gordon and then saw a door opening out of a camoflauged cave out of which thundered the TV Batmobile, which it must be admitted was much more appealing than the one appearing in the comics of the time. (Indeed, it was eventually used in the comic itself, though, ironically enough, not until the TV show had been cancelled.)

Perhaps one reason the show did well was its use of offbeat villains, the likes of whom were relatively new to TV. Starting off the series was a rewrite of a recent Riddler story from the comics. The Riddler, although a favorite of the old-time Batman fans, actually appeared twice in 1948 and vanished until his

revival in the sixties. It was his presence on the TV show that put him in the prominence of a major villain. The producers expected him to be the most popular villain, especially as he was portrayed rather well by the multi-talented Frank Gorshin. Most fans of the Batman of the comics probably expected the greatest Batman foe of all, The Joker, to win this spot. To everyone's surprise, it was the comical figure of The Penguin that attained this position.

Why? Don't forget that this was during the camp craze that was now spearheaded by the Batman show. It was produced for laughs, not for serious adventure. In fact, at one point the show was nominated for an Emmy as the best comedy of the year! Another ridiculous aspect of the show was its invention of new villains. It just didn't make any sense to take the comic hero who fought the largest number of bizarre villains this side of Dick Tracy and to create what were, for the most part, poor villains. From out of the comics only The Joker, The Riddler, The Catwoman, The Penguin, Mr. Freeze (originally Mr. Zero of the fifties who appeared a total of two times, the second in 1968 with his new name), False Face and The Mad Hatter appeared. The probable reason for the show's new villains was its policy of having big stars appear in villainous roles, so they created villains especially for each actor. Sadly, villain stories were the only thing done on the show, and became monotonous before long.

Batman's fame grew, regardless. After guest-starring in the Superman newspaper strip, which had been running since 1939, it was dropped in favor of a new Batman strip which was even campier than the show. The Batman 3-D was reprinted with a new cover and a couple of photos from the show, though the insides were left unchanged. Records with Bat Music came out in scores, and a terrible movie was put out. A paperback series appeared, which was, for the most part, the best thing to come out of the craze. Batman also won the spot of honor in Brave and Bold, a teamup comic he still stars in. Camp had become a big part of the Batman comics, much to the dismay of Batmanians everywhere. A new Batgirl (groan!) had been introduced into the comic and soon became a part of the TV show. The show's lifespan had reached an end, however. In its third season it had gone weekly, and would not be renewed. A cartoon series on Saturday morning would be his last stand for the sixties. Suddenly Batman was nowhere. But where was Batman?

The less popular the series became, the better the comic book and the comic strip began to look. At long last, Robin got to go to college. In his solo stories each character became more clearly defined, as Batman and Robin finally seemed to be more than reflections of each other. Then at last, the most brilliant move of all was made. The Batman returned! He was now more than just another costumed detective; he really was The Batman, a creature of the night who for the first time in decades looked as if he really could strike terror into the hearts of criminals. The villains were wisely put aside to give the feature a look of greater realism. On the other hand, to match his newly returned spookiness the character now often found himself involved with the supernatural, as befitting the growing interest of horror in the field.

Things for the Batman were looking better than ever everywhere, except on TV. After a teamup of Batman and Robin, who looked unchanged, and Scooby Doo (sick!) there appeared that new Saturday morning show, The Super-Friends. After all the work to make the comic an adult effort, here Batman was made for kids again. In case you were smart enough, unlike me, never to watch it, it stars the sixties version of Batman and Robin, Wonder Woman, Superman, Aquaman, two teenagers, and a sickening creature that is laughingly referred to as Wonder Dog. Since violence is now looked

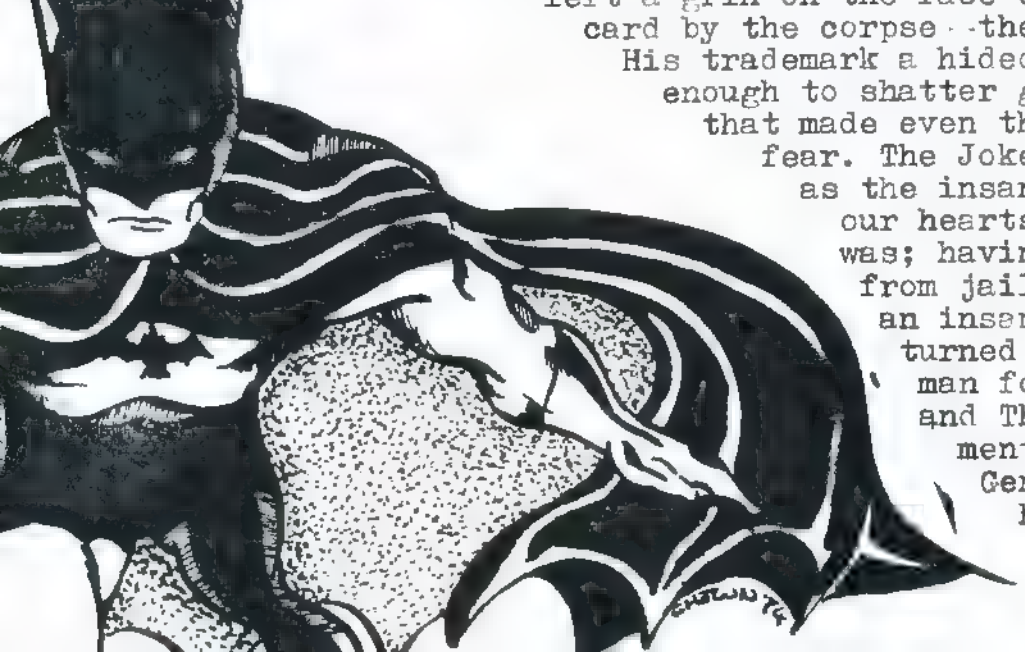
down upon in children's shows, each week for the entire season of hour-long shows no one seems to hit anyone! The villains who always endanger lives invariably turn out to be heroes for ecology. These are plots?

Happily the only "real" Batman stayed a fearful figure in the comics, including the newspaper strip. Still, the comic strip met its demise two years ago, for rather annoying reasons. Suddenly the syndicate decided to use its own artist instead of the art supplied by DC. Besides the fact that this was the worst drawn Batman done anywhere, the syndicate now used an equally-inept writer who assumed Batgirl knew the identities of Batman and Robin, and dropped the The from Batman. When DC complained about the outrage, the syndicate had Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson hang up their capes, to be ordered around by a new alien superhero named Galexo. DC got the syndicate to drop the names and characters of Batman and Robin. As for the strip, it was renamed Galexo and is still running featuring the character as he guns down Communists. I hope the strip is never seen in Red China, or we may have a World War III yet!

As for the comic book, the feature was never better. With the likes of Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams, near-perfection was reached. None of the forties' crudity or cartooniness was present, and the stories had every advantage over the original version of The Batman except in one regard. The criminals seemed to be pretty much alike. By the end of the sixties the readers had become so saturated with super-villains that they were glad to see them go, but by now their total absence had become ridiculous.

Man-Bat at first seemed to be as close as the seventies would come to a super-villain. But soon new ones were created to test the waters, so to speak. "The Man with Ten Eyes," Colonel Sulphur and the Bounty Hunter (in Brave & Bold) appeared, and Dr. Tzin-Tzin and Two-Face were revived with good results. The best of the new villain creations were the Spook and the greatest of all, Ras al Ghul. DC was decided. The market for super-villains for Batman was once again present.

Since 1968 none of the most famous villains had yet reappeared. Happily, in 1973 this situation was remedied. After all, Sherlock Holmes must ever have his Moriarty, Captain America his Red Skull, and The Batman his Joker. And so it was that in Batman #251 the greatest villain of all, The Joker, returned. But this time with a difference! For here was The Joker the comics world first knew and loved. At long last, the mocking murderer who left a grin on the face of a victim and a card by the corpse--the card of The Joker. His trademark a hideous laugh powerful enough to shatter glass, and a smile that made even the brave quiver with fear. The Joker was now portrayed as the insane creature deep in our hearts we always knew he was; having now escaped not from jail, but rather from an insane asylum. Also returned to the fold of Batman foes are The Catwoman and The Penguin, not to mention the Getaway Genius. I for one am happy to see the



villains return, but I hope this time DC does not overdo it as was done in 1966-68.

The Batman has recently been running into The Shadow, crediting the latter as the inspiration for his career. This is practically an "in" joke for DC, as that is extremely faithful to the truth of The Batman's creation. Also along the lines of guest-star appearances was the recent, much-acclaimed Swamp Thing story that not only won the Comic Art Fan Award for the best story of 1973 (and is also an easy winner on the 1973 Batmania Ballot--RHM) but also introduced many non superhero fans to the new version of The Batman. As for this year, I suspect the new Ras al Ghul/Creeper/Batman story will be the comic event of the year. The Batman is reaching the peak for a comic book character, and as Batmanian Paul Gambaccini said in 1964, "It's where he belongs!"

Apparently DC thinks so, too, for The Batman is DC's only major character to appear exclusively in the massive hundred-page format, complete with reprints of his adventures from each decade. As a matter of fact, all five of his books--Batman, Detective, Brave & Bold, World's Finest and the Justice League -have the 100 page size! Other changes, such as the return of the original logos of Batman and Detective, have been made. There is renewed interest in The Batman of late, with this very fanzine as additional evidence. 1974 is the year of the Bat!

THE BATMANIANS SPEAK

Dear Rich,

As the former editor of BATMANIA it was a tremendous thrill to see the "fanzine for BATMAN fans" once more a reality. The 18th issue (your first) was a long time coming. Since 1967 I have at least twice given its revival serious thought--but never could put it all together. When you contacted me some months ago I was eager to give a new editor all the encouragement I could, as I feel there is, and always has been, a place for such a fanzine.

I was not disappointed in the BATMANIA reincarnation. Let me go thru issue #18 with you, and I'll give you some opinions I have on your 1st issue.

Cover--I was very happy being able to do the art for this issue, and can be called on for future covers -whether they be ditto'd, or black & white ink for offset.

Your "Operation: Revival" page is the sort of page I used in every issue of BATMANIA, as I tried to tell the "Batmanians" of my plans; what was happening with BATMAN, etc. I hope Mike Friedrich can come up with something. (Meanwhile, I'm sending you an unused piece he prepared for me years ago.)

I enjoyed reading Arlen Schumer's comments on Archie Goodwin. Plus having some fine illos, and printed offset, these pages were a big asset.

"The Batmaniams Speak" section is the real "meat" of all my issues--depending on the letters of comment, of course. You might want to print lots of these--as long as they concern BATMAN. I generally tried to go light on those that only praised BATMANIA.

The Jim Jones article--Now here is a well-laid-out article that Jim is capable of. I certainly hope your readers like this. It is a fine 6 pages.

Dick Kanipsia's article on the comic consumer was something I hope those in power will take notice of. When you stop to think about the way things are going it would be unbelievable, perhaps, to see the news-stand of 1980.

Enjoyed the COMIC ODDITIES, and was most pleased you are continuing

this. I even like to see a few ads from time to time, and they help pay the bills.

UPDATE--I didn't get an awful lot out of this, but liked the art and the two pages being offset. Hope you can eventually go all offset.

GOTHAM WIRETAPS--I wonder how "new" your news will be, as I've heard (read) in the COMIC READER that DC news will go out mainly in their $1.50 book by mail.

Loved Jim Jones' "back" cover. Fantastic!

The BATMANIA BALLOT was great for your 1st issue. It gives us something to do between issues. I'll get mine completed and return it to you shortly.

Congratulations on a really fine first issue. Excitedly, I'll await your second. --Biljo White, P.O.Box 440, Columbia, Mo. 65201.

(There can be no higher praise for Batmania--for Biljo is, for those of you who don't know, the founder and Editor Emeritus of this zine. He is now publishing The Stripper--and stop drooling, it's devoted to comic strips--which also sells for 50¢.

DC still seems to be pretty nice about news - as Batmania is a "specialty" zine, they're willing to give more information about Batman than anyone else would get--or would want! I have to put the lettercol together from what I get--but if any of you want to express your views on The Batman, here's your chance!--RHM)

Rich:

First of all, sorry for the delay in writing. I received Batmania #18 Saturday and would have written sooner, but the rest of the week got in the way. A very impressive issue. The Comic Oddities by Van Vlack and the others were impressive. The Jim Jones interview was brazen and off the cuff and still contained some good points.

The Schumer article on the Goodwin issues of Detective - on his points dealing with J. Schwartz. Schwartz, I predict, will be throwing Detective Chimp and Kid Eternity inside the book because he has business experience--and he feels that kids buy most of the comics, so he'll cater to the juvenile market. Mark My Words.

On Zilber's comment in his Update on Toth's Batman--I enjoyed the art but felt it should have been in black and white. Toth's graphics look better in B&W because his work depends heavily on shadows. (Toth on Shadow.) Back to Batman, Toth has no benefit with color on slick covers.

The Jasinski, Schumer and Van Vlack art was very good!!! About this Dick Kanipsia, I feel he's a flash in the pan, but then again I said the same thing about Marvin Hamlisch.

Very good issue. Congrats,
Thomas Lineham, 55 Hillside Street, Boston, Mass. 02120.

(Thomas is just kidding in that last statement, of course. I happen to know he and Dick Kanipsia are good friends--very good friends, if I haven't said too much already! Who's Marvin Hamlisch?--RHM)

Dear Rich,

Received Batmania #18 yesterday...and I really don't know what to say. Batmania is--and always was- in a class all by itself. It can be compared only superficially with, say, the Outpost or, on another level, with the dozens of ditto/mimeo zines that have been on the market all these years. It's different from all the rest...but let me back up a second. I do know what to say: I like it.

Why so Hard to describe; I have to wrench myself free from my customary frame of reference as a fan. For years I've read Batman, Detective and Brave and Bold, and every so often I have really enjoyed a BM (if the abbreviation is permissible) story; but I don't think I'm a hard-core Batmanian. Likewise, I've read fanzines running the gamut from The Harvard Journal of Pictorial Fiction to some of the cruddiest crapzines you can imagine.

Where does this leave me Well, I guess I'm a jaded fan who happens to get turned on by a fanzine that truly has class -which Batmania has and did have when Capt. Liljo ran the show. It's not physically slick and the contents can't be characterized that way, either. But the entire product -your #18 and the Liljo era issues I'm fortunate enough to own leave me with a nice and warm glow inside whenever I look at them.

I don't think this is because Batmania is a labor of love (which it is), because most fanzines are, too...and they don't leave me with the same feeling. I can't really put my finger on it, but I think the reason is that Batmania is one of the few zines that positively and beautifully reeks of...innocence. Of a less complicated point of view, unburnished by attempts at profundity that often leave fanzine editors with egg on their faces. It's simple but not simplistic, and in its own, almost quaint way, a total joy to read.

New times have changed, and you're not Liljo White, so I didn't expect you to maintain very closely Liljo's format or general tone. But surprisingly enough to me, you almost did just that. I don't know if you'll be able to keep it up or if fandom will support or--sign of the times -even tolerate the revived Batmania's presence on the scene. But I hope you can pull it off and that fandom, despite the legions of cross eyed reviewers at large, will accept what you're doing.

The only thing thing that rubbed me the wrong way about your first issue, Rich, was Arlen Schumer's eulogy to Archie Goodwin. Not that Mr. Sure, there's a place for such in Batmania...but Arlen, in his preoccupation with Manhunter, not only strayed from the issue at hand but injected some of that irritating crypto-profundity that has no place in Batmania. It just didn't fit.

I'm reserving judgment on Jay's "Update" column; although it almost makes me feel like a proud papa, since I thought up the title originally and asked Jay to write a prototype column for the Outpost two years ago, I have a queasy feeling that it, too, somehow doesn't belong in Batmania. Why. Mainly because Batmania always was a fanzine for all Batman fans, and to elevate Jay's personal reactions to the Gotham City chronicles above those of the rest of your readership leaves me a little cold. This isn't to criticize the column per se, but rather to set you to thinking about whether it belongs.

But as I said, you're running the show now and today's industry and fandom aren't what they were ten years ago. I'm not normally given to nostalgic tendencies...but when I look at a lot of the crap both are producing nowadays, it's enough to set this 30-year-old yearning for the good ol' days of the mid-'60's, when Marvel was so brilliantly struggling

against the National behemoth--a successful struggle that since has turned sour--and fandom was uncluttered with rip-off dealers and Gardner Fox could turn in some real clunkers and get away with it and the wonderfully trite and innocent books Mort Weisinger turned out every few days and dittozines and a 13-year-old genius like Jim Shooter and the dedication and love a man like Biljo White could put into what I think is the classic fanzine, Batmania.

It's a tough act to follow, Rich, and through no fault of your own I don't think you'll succeed if you conscientiously maintain the flavor of Biljo's Batmania. But I hope you will succeed and faithfully follow in Biljo's footsteps; as you apparently intend, judging from #18. I wish you all the luck in the world, not only for your sake but for my own as well. Because Batmania is one of the few real joys present in a fandom that, taken as a whole, fast is becoming a cesspool.

--Harry C. Broertjes, 728 Clark St., Apt. 302, Evanston, IL 60201

(Harry is the publisher of The Legion Outpost--a 75¢ offset zine devoted in part--but not entirely--to the Legion of Super-Heroes.

It was never my intention to "elevate Jay's personal reactions" - or anyone else's, for that matter -"above those of the rest of my readership." Like all opinion articles, Update is intended as a springboard for discussion--as witness the next letter--RHM)

Dear Rich,

Congratulations on the publication of your first issue of Batmania! While this issue got Batmania off to a good start, it left much room for improvement. On the whole, the reproduction was adequate, but some of the mimeo pages had their left sides lopped off. Still, I must disagree with Jim Jones, who says that you should go offset, since the offset pages weren't much better than the mimeo ones. In the future, if you widen the margins Batmania's reproduction will be fine.

Inside, the quality of the articles varied greatly. "The Legacies of Archie Goodwin" was well-written, and it remains my favorite feature of the issue. Arlen Schumer did, however, make some statements which I can not let go unchallenged. Arlen points out that Detective's circulation was down with Julius Schwartz as editor, but he then goes on to assume that under editor Archie Goodwin sales went up. This I question. If Arlen were to show some evidence of this, he would be much more credible.

The thing that bothers me most, though, is Arlen's opinion of the Manhunter. I think it's far better to let Manhunter die now than to let the strip continue until it degenerates to the point where nobody cares when it's dropped. Why can't a series have a strong ending and leave the fans with something good to remember? For example, it would have been much better had Deadman been sent to his grave in Strange Adventures #216, when the saga had reached its logical conclusion, than to see the character debased as he was in his subsequent Brave and Bold, Aquaman, Challengers, JLA, Forever People, World's Finest and Phantom Stranger appearances. As it now stands the Manhunter series can be remembered as sixty-nine pages of the best art and story DC has ever produced.

"There is no reason why Schwartz cannot hire another writer, keep Simonson on the art chores, and thereby resurrect Manhunter from the dead," says Arlen. Well, if he would take his blinders off, he would see lots of reasons. What makes him think Simonson would want to keep drawing the strip? Walt Simonson has proven himself to be an artist in the true sense of the word and would presumably refuse to compromise himself by drawing from a script, especially if it were as bad as the current Spectre strips Arlen cites. The revival of the Spectre shows that you can take a character with "the potential for greatness," give it excellent artwork and still end up with crap.

Jay Zilber's "Update" column was okay, but Jay has one quality that disqualifies him from ever being a really good critic. He equates "different" with "inferior." One of the best things Archie Goodwin did as editor of Detective was to show us how the Batman looks when rendered in different styles. The Chaykin and Toth stories stand out as two of the most interesting art jobs DC has published. Regarding Jay's other comments, let me say that Jim Aparo, despite the fact that his art is rarely colored properly, is one of the best artists ever to handle the Batman on a regular basis. Just because an artist strays from the standard Dick Giordano style, he is not necessarily inferior. I'll bet Jay didn't like Frank Robbins' Batman, either.

Let me cast my vote against reprints in Batmania. The Jim Jones interview was the worst thing in the issue. It had nothing to do with the Batman. After reading it, my main thought was "who cares." As for reprinting "Batman Before Robin" --since it's been reprinted in one of G.F. Love's Fandom Annuals why a third go-round.

--Leo Keil, Apt. 4C4, 402 Foulk Rd., Wilmington, Dela. 19803

(Good point on reprints--this issue's are limited to Ray Miller's updated Batman index, which is virtually timeless...

I don't think Jay Zilber's views disqualify him from being a good critic -what matters is the ability to express them. As it happens, I don't entirely agree with him in all cases -I too think Aparo is one of the Batman's best artists, enjoy the occasional sketchy style of a Toth or Robbins as a change of pace- and I rather like the old villains, even the Penguin...

As for the possible resurrection of Manhunter, your parallel with the Spectre is an apt analogy--I personally rank Michael Fleischer alongside Percival Popp as contributions to the feature's quality go, though some fans, Arlen included, seem to like the new series. On the other hand, I feel Deadman maintained a high quality at least as long as Neal Adams remained on the art -it's only after he was turned over to such inappropriate teams as Kirby/Royer and Dillin/Colletta that he began to slip.

It hasn't happened yet, but I'm sure some day someone will apply a similar argument to Batmania "No one else can handle it as well as Liljo did, so why try " However good the original feature or fanzine was, its early editions are in the past -and nothing short of the rankest inconsistency (which is what has hurt Deadman and the Spectre so badly) can ever diminish its quality. Comics are meant to be enjoyed now -not stuck away like dusty museum pieces! Regardless of whether a new team can possibly handle a feature as well as its originators, if they do any kind of a decent job at all, why not let them bring new pleasure to old and new generations of readers. --RHM)

Jack Ryder appears on the first page of the second chapter of the forthcoming Detective serial, broadcasting a convenient summary of Chapter I on WHAM-TV (apparently his sponsors have cooled off by now), but The Creeper is mentioned nowhere. In that chapter Batman is imprisoned for the double murder of Talia and Ras al Ghul, and escapes in an unexpected, yet completely logical way see if you can figure it out!

Other Batman news: Issue 260 of his own book features a story in which the Joker slips him a serum that would cause him to literally die laughing! #260 has a Scarecrow story drawn by Ernie Chua, and Bob says the fans are in for a real treat.

The reprint selections in Detective will change dramatically when Julie Schwartz takes over again -mostly detective-oriented tales, with old Detective star Roy Raymond and Strange Adventures' 21st century hero Star Hawkins in every issue -plus such plainclothes detectives as Sierra Smith, and a few Creeper reprints to accompany his return appearance. Sometimes I think Julie takes titles too literally...

And early in 1975, The Joker will get his own book, meeting Two Face in the first issue! The Metamorpho and Spectre books may also be revived, with Aquaman moving into Adventure's lead spot. The new Sandman book will also be continued under Orlando's editorship, with art by Chua and Royer.

National will now be returning original art--tentatively to the penciller, though other plans are being considered. (Marvel gives the splash page to the writer, and divides the rest between penciller and inker.) So with luck, Neal Adams' strike against DC will end...

Contrary to the rumors that have been going around, The Shadow will continue--Robbins will remain on the art, with inks by Frank McLaughlin so he can fit it in with his Marvel work. Mike Uslan makes his writing debut with #9. Also exagger ated were the reports that DC would eventually convert its entire line to Superspecs--indeed, Shazam! will go back to 32 pages (but remain bimonthly) with #17. DC is also considering reducing its new pages to 18 per issue, as it presently sees no other way to keep the price at 20¢.

The "Famous First Edition" reprint of Superman #1 has been postponed indefinitely, as it contained a biography of the character's creators, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster--which is legally touchy as Siegel and Shuster are now suing National for the rights to the early stories! Ah, well... at least it means we'll be able to see Batman #1 that much sooner. It will definitely be followed by Wonder Woman #1 and All Star #3 (the first Justice Society story), and Tridvell is pushing for the first issues of Flash Comics and Captain Marvel Adventures.

Veteran Superman writer Leo Dorfman passed away on June 9th--his last two Jimmy Olsen stories will appear in Superman Family #170. Bob Haney will chronicle "Mr. Action's" adventures from then on, while Martin Pasko is being considered for Ghosts.

Over at Marvel, Roy Thomas has resigned as an editor, though he will continue to write for that company (including a new book set in the '40's, with new adventures of such old Timely heroes as Captain America, Subby and the original Human Torch. Mike Friedrich will be scripting revivals of the X-Men and the Warlock, to be drawn by Dave Cockrum and Jim Starlin respectively. The Golem has been cancelled, but Iron-Man is returning to monthly status.

I'm not sure who'll be replacing Roy as editor--I've heard a lot of names, including Tony Isabella, Sol Brodsky, Len Wein and Marv Wolfman. I suspect all of them will be handling some titles--Roy had to handle more than all of DC's editors combined, which is reportedly why he quit. But Batmanians need not fear--Len's Detective serial will run to its conclusion, as it was written and sold all at once!

--Rich Morrissey

(with thanks to Bob Rozakis, E. Nelson Bridwell, Mike Friedrich, et al)

COMIC ODDITIES AND BAT-FACTS

WHO IS THE ONE VILLAIN for whom it would be impossible for him to kill The Batman (yes, the villain is alive)? None other than the Riddler! In Detective #377, quote, "Shall I finish 'em off now, Riddler?" Says the arch foe, "No, no, fool! It's impossible for me to rob unless I leave Batman and Robin a riddle clue to my capers! If their lives come to an end, so does my crime career!"

--Robert Mallory

MOST OF YOU have seen Jack Kirby's Thor story in Tales of the Unexpected #16 (or its reprint in DC Special #4), but this was not the only case where Kirby repeated himself. In Alarming Tales #1, a 1957 Harvey comic,

there is a story, "The Last Enemy," which foreshadows the Kamandi series. In this story, after atomic war destroys all human life, animal life becomes humanized and human tigers, dogs, bears and foxes fight to keep the world from going to the rats! - Robert Stump

I CAN PROVE that the Marvel heroes live on Earth-One! In 1972 two stories appeared, one in Thor and one in Justice League, both taking place at the Halloween Parade in Rutland, Vermont. Both involve the same group of fans/pros --their car was stolen in Englehart's Thor story, but you have to read Wein's JLA piece to learn that it was Felix Faust who stole it. --E. Nelson Bridwell

MORE PEACEFUL (?) COEXISTENCE--DC has yet to reprint a story of one of the Marvel Family, namely Captain Marvel Bunny (alias Hoppy). Yes, he does coexist with the MF, as Mary Marvel once met the super-powered rabbit! --Robert Mallory

INACCURATE ADS--An ad in Superboy #164 shows the cover of Action #387, which has the story title, "Even Supermen Die." But the actual cover has the title, "Even a Superman Dies." The cover of Superboy #160 states, "The Adventures of Superman When He Was a Teen," but an ad in Superman #290 shows the issue's cover with the word boy instead of teen. In Detective #398, an ad for Superboy #164 shows Superboy's costume as ripped. But on the actual cover, his costume is not torn. Also, there is a headlight on the car which does not appear in the ad. Looks like DC can't do anything right where Superboy is concerned... --Stephen Weisenbach

HOW SHOULD I KNOW? Check out Vampirella #27, page 38, 1st panel, and you'll see Captain Marvel and Superman having their eternal argument as to "who came first!" --Mercy Van Vlack

WHAT FAMOUS MARVEL SUPERHERO said the following lines: "Why must they build doorways so narrow!" "His first shot missed because he was so nervous! But he'll not get another chance!" "I have gone far enough! I should be under my destination by now! But there is no manhole above me -- no opening! Bah! I cannot delay! I'll make an opening!" and finally, "Fool! Did you not see me in time!" Believe it or not, it was The Thing talking during the first eight pages of Fantastic Four #1! During the rest of the story The Thing talked in the manner for which he is so famous today! --Robert Mallory

KIRBY ISN'T THE ONLY comic book repeater! I found these stories, all drawn by Russ Heath, on the same theme: "The Human Tidal Wave" (Sea Devils #7), "The Human Wave" (House of Secrets #31), and "Invasion of the Water Warriors" (Strange Adventures #116) --Robert Stump

SPEAKING OF WHICH--has anyone compared the origin of Lena Thorul's ESP powers (Action #295) with "The Secret of Superboy's Sister" (Superboy #176)? They're really quite similar! Both stories were written by the late Leo Dorfman, who was probably stuck for a plot the second time around --but that's why any attempt at making Kathy Warren a regular character is bound to end in disaster!

THE 1974 BATMANIA BALLOT

In each category, place a "1" before your favorite, "2" before your second choice, and so on up to "5."

Best Batman and/or Robin Story

BATMAN	#254 Feb.	____	King of the Gotham Jungle
		____	The Phenomenal Memory of Luke Graham
"	#255 Apr.	____	Moon of the Wolf
"	#256 June	____	Catwoman's Circus Caper
"	#257 Aug.	____	Hail Emperor Penguin
"	#258 Oct.	____	Threat of the Two Headed Coin
DETECTIVE COMICS	#438 Jan.	____	A Monster Walks Wayne Manor
" "	#439 Mar.	____	Night of the Stalker
" "	#440 May	____	Ghost Mountain Midnight
" "	#441 July	____	Judgment Day
" "	#442 Sept.	____	Death Flies the Haunted Sky

Best Batman Teamup:

BATMAN	#259 Dec.	____	The Night of the Shadow
BRAVE AND BOLD	#110 Jan.	____	A Very Special Spy
" " "	#111 Mar.	____	Death Has the Last Laugh
" " "	#112 May	____	The Impossible Escape
" " "	#113 July	____	The 50 Story Killer
" " "	#114 Sept.	____	Last Jet to Gotham
" " "	#115 Nov.	____	The Corpse that Wouldn't Die
DETECTIVE COMICS	#443 Nov.	____	Gotterdammerung
WORLD'S FINEST	#221 Feb.	____	Cry Not for My Forsaken Son
" "	#222 Apr.	____	Evil in Paradise
" "	#223 June	____	Wipe the Blood Off My Name
" "	#224 Aug.	____	The Shocking Switch of the Super Sons
" "	#225 Oct.	____	Now Before Satan's Children
" "	#226 Dec.	____	The Freak Who Never Fails

Best Batman Reprint:

BATMAN	#254 Feb.	____	The Witch and the Manuscript of Doom
		____	The Bullet-Hole Club
		____	The Man Who Stole From Batman
		____	The Son of the Joker
		____	The Guardian of the Bat-Signal
"	#255 Apr.	____	The First Batman
		____	The Duped Domestics
		____	The True-False Face of Batman
		____	Crazy-Quilt Comes Back
		____	The Outsider Strikes Again
"	#256 June	____	Dinosaur Island
		____	The Penny Plunderers
		____	Brothers in Crime
		____	The 1001 Trophies of Batman
		____	The Secret of Batman Island
"	#257 Aug.	____	Hunt for a Robin Killer
		____	Ally Babble and the 14 Peeves
		____	The Conversational Clue
		____	Die Small - Die Big
		____	Rackety-Rax Racket

(continued on other side)

Best Batman Reprint (continued):

BATMAN	#258 Oct.	____	The Three Racketeers
		____	Seven Wonder Crimes of Gotham City
		____	Twenty-Ton Robbery
		____	Guardian of 100 Cities
		____	The Man With 1000 Eyes
"	#259 Dec.	____	The Great Batman Swindle
		____	The Strange Costumes of Batman
		____	Heroes by Proxy
		____	Two Batmen Too Many
		____	The Failure of Bruce Wayne
BRAVE AND BOLD	#112 May	____	The Tick-Tock Traps of the Time Commander
DETECTIVE COMICS	#438 Jan.	____	Gotham Gang Line-Up
" "	#439 Mar.	____	Batman's Bewitched Nightmare
" "	#440 May	____	Inside Story of the Outsider
" "	#441 July	____	The Case of the Prophetic Pictures
		____	The Carbon Copy Crimes
" "	#442 Sept.	____	Vanishing Village
" "	#443 Nov.	____	The Secret of Hunter's Inn
WORLD'S FINEST	#223 June	____	The Reversed Heroes
		____	The Composite Superman
" "	#224 Aug.	____	Superman's Secret Master
		____	Fort Crime
" "	#225 Oct.	____	The Olsen-Robin Team

Select your favorite five covers from 1974 -- BATMAN #254____ #255____ #256____ #257____ #258____ #259____ BRAVE AND BOLD #110____ #111____ #112____ #113____ #114____ #115____ DETECTIVE #438____ #439____ #440____ #441____ #442____ #443____ WORLD'S FINEST #221____ #222____ #223____ #224____ #225____ #226____

Favorite Writer:

____ Steve Englehart
____ Archie Goodwin
____ Bob Haney
____ Elliot S! Maggin
____ Denny O'Neil
____ Frank Robbins
____ Len Wein

Favorite Artist:

____ Neal Adams
____ Sal Amendola
____ Jim Aparo
____ Howard Chaykin
____ Dick Dillin
____ Irv Novick
____ Walt Simonson
____ Alex Toth

Favorite Editor:

____ Murray Boltinoff
____ Archie Goodwin
____ Julius Schwartz

1. Would you like to see Robin appear with Batman more often, less often, or as much as presently? _____

2. Would you like to see more, fewer, or the present amount of super-villain stories--and are there any such villains you would especially like, or not like, to see? _____

It is not necessary that you remove and send this official ballot. You may use another sheet of paper to list your favorites and to answer the last two questions. All Batmanians are asked to complete this ballot. (And don't worry if you haven't read all the stories--just vote on the ones you have read!) Results will be printed in Batmania #20 and forwarded to DC. Send to: Rich Morrissey, 55 Claudette Circle, Framingham, Massachusetts 01701.